

When Sustainability Labels Backfire: Showcasing Temporal and Moderating Effects in Online Retail Using Amazon's Climate Pledge Friendly Label Sales Data

Christina Reh

Hochschule Luzern/WHU - Otto Beisheim School of Management

Jessica Mazurek

HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management

Laura Ebbinghaus

Lucerne School of Business/HHL Leipzig Graduate School of Management

Dominik Georgi

Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts

Erik Maier

Chemnitz University of Technology

Christian Schlereth

WHU - Otto Beisheim School of Management

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Abstract

E-commerce platforms increasingly use sustainability labels to guide consumer choices, yet evidence on their effectiveness across price levels, and over time remains limited. This study examines the impact of Amazon's Climate Pledge Friendly (CPF) meta-label using a quasi-experimental design combining a staggered difference-in-differences (SDD) approach and propensity score matching on large-scale sales data. Results show an initial sales increase that varies across price segments over time. These findings reveal the temporal dynamics and boundary conditions of sustainability meta-labels, offering new insights for scholars studying cue utilisation and sustainable consumption, and providing platform managers and policymakers with guidance on when sustainability labels support or potentially undermine market outcomes.

Track: Retailing & Omni-Channel Management